

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: Independent & Federal Programs

ITEM: Will the State Board grant renewal of general independent school approval to the Upper Valley Waldorf School, Quechee, VT, to serve students in grades K-8?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education grant renewal of general independent school approval to the Upper Valley Waldorf School, Quechee, Vermont, to serve students in grades K-8. This approval is for 5 years, through June 30, 2011.

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. Section 166 (b)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. The Upper Valley Waldorf School offers an education whose aim is to nourish the child's whole being. The school seeks to foster a healthy balance of intellectual achievement, spiritual growth, artistic creativity, physical development, and personal and social responsibility. The school serves students in grades K-8.
2. The State Board of Education last granted approval to the Upper Valley Waldorf School on February 12, 2002 through June 30, 2006.
3. The school was visited on behalf of the Commissioner on November 2, 2006 by Julie Kuk and Pat Pallas Gray.
4. The minimum course of study is based on Rudolph Steiner's philosophy of education, and meets the minimum course of study as prescribed in 16 V.S.A. §906. The curriculum is adapted to the age and ability of each student. The aim of a Waldorf school program is to ultimately develop free human beings who are able to impart purpose and direction to their lives. The school works in concert and with the cooperation of the parents.
5. At the time of the visit, 132 students were enrolled in grades K-8. The school also operates a nursery program.
6. The school has the resources, including professional staff, to meet the needs of the students. The staff includes an administrator, 8 teachers, 2 teacher aides, a eurhythmy teacher, a French teacher, a German teacher, and a music/hand-work teacher. The staff is trained in the

Waldorf philosophy of education. Each teacher, except for the kindergarten teacher, starts with a class of students in grade one and remains with this class through the eighth grade.

7. The main school building is the former Quechee Grammar School where grades 2-8 and the main administrative offices are located. A newly constructed classroom building houses the parent toddler, nursery, kindergarten and first grade classes. A nearby 1870's farmhouse is utilized for faculty and staff offices, therapeutic and tutorial rooms, community meeting space and a school store. There is also a mobile classroom structure where the manual arts instruction is provided. The facility meets state and federal health and safety regulations, is handicapped accessible, and is adequate to meet the needs of the program.
8. The Upper Valley Waldorf School has support services in place and the financial capacity to meet the needs of the program. The school has a plan for professional development for their staff.
9. The student attendance, assessment, and health records were reviewed and found to be in good order.
10. The school maintains an operating schedule that includes a total number of instructional hours each year that is not less than that required of a public school serving the same grades.

COST IMPLICATIONS: None

STAFF AVAILABLE:

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